

REMARKS

Applicant appreciates the Examiner's thorough examination of the present application as evidenced by the Office Action of January 7, 2005 (hereinafter "Office Action"). In response, Applicant has amended independent Claims 1, 20, 37, and 54 to clarify that the process material referenced in the rendering methods and screw presses comprises animal carcasses and/or bones. Applicants submit that the cited reference fails to disclose or suggest the recitations of the independent claims as amended. Accordingly, Applicant submits that all pending claims are in condition for allowance. Favorable reconsideration of all pending claims is respectfully requested for at least the reasons discussed hereafter.

The Drawings

The Office Action states that FIGS. 1 and 3a should be designated as "Prior Art." (Office Action, page 2). In response, Applicant submits amended drawings herewith in which FIGS. 1 and 3a include the "Prior Art" designation.

The Office Action further states that the structural arrangement of the mixer regions recited in Claims 15 - 17, 32 - 34, 49 - 51, and 66 - 68, the temperature control element recited in Claims 18, 35, 52, and 69, and the choke recited in Claims 19, 36, 53, and 70 must be shown in the drawings. (Office Action, page 2). Under 35 U.S.C. §113, an "applicant shall furnish a drawing where necessary for the understanding of the subject matter to be patented." Applicant respectfully submits that one skilled in the art would not need an additional or modified drawing to understand the aforementioned claims when read in connection with the illustration of the screw press embodiments of FIG. 2.

Claims 11, 12, 28, 29, 45, 46, 62, and 63 Satisfy the Requirements of 35 U.S.C. §112

Claims 11, 12, 28, 29, 45, 46, 62, and 63 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §112, second paragraph, as being indefinite. (Office Action, page 3). With regard to Claims 11, 28, 45, and 62, Applicant has amended these claims to clarify that the discharge end refers to the frusto conical member discharge end. With regard to Claims 12, 29, 46, and 63, Applicant has amended these claims to clarify that the feed inlet end refers to the frusto conical member feed inlet end.

Independent Claims 1, 20, 37, and 54 are Patentable

Independent Claims 1, 20, 37, and 54 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as being anticipated by U. S. Patent NO. 4,915,830 to Mackay et al. (hereinafter "Mackay").

Independent Claim 1 is directed to a rendering method of extracting liquids from a process material that comprises animal carcasses and/or bones. For example, Claim 1 recites:

compressing the process material, which comprises animal carcasses and/or bones;
decompressing the process material;
mixing the process material; and
recompressing the process material, wherein the steps of compressing, decompressing, mixing, and recompressing are performed via a mechanical screw press.

Claims 20, 37, and 54 include similar recitations. Some embodiments of the present invention stem from a realization that a multi-stage approach for sequentially pressing, mixing, and pressing target matter could be applied to the rendering industry. As noted on page 2, lines 11 - 23, such an approach had been found advantageous for certain uses, such as extraction of oil from seeds, but had been considered unsuitable for use in rendering screw presses because of a perceived risk of clogging of the rendering process material in the mixing portion of the worm assembly in the screw press. As noted on page 2, lines 26 - 28, Applicant has identified that, surprisingly, not only can a screw press be modified to include a mixing region in the worming assembly for use in the rendering industry, but such a press by result in a significantly improved yield of oil/fat from the mechanical press.

Mackay describes an apparatus and method for the displacement washing and pressing of pulp. Thus, in sharp contrast with the recitations of Claims 1, 20, 37, and 54, as amended, Mackay appears to contain no disclosure or suggestion of using a screw press to process animal carcasses and/or bones.

For at least the foregoing reasons, Applicants respectfully submit that independent Claims 1, 20, 37, and 54 are patentable over the cited reference and that Claims 2 - 19, 21 - 36, 38 - 53, and 55 - 70 are patentable at least per the patentability of independent Claims 1, 20, 37, and 54.

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Serial No.: 10/624,441
Filing Date: July 22, 2003
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CONCLUSION

In light of the above remarks, Applicant respectfully submits that the above-entitled application is now in condition for allowance. Favorable reconsideration of this application is respectfully requested. If, in the opinion of the Examiner, a telephonic conference would expedite the examination of this matter, the Examiner is invited to call the undersigned attorney at (919) 854-1400.

Respectfully submitted,



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